

Feb.
1/27/06

Administrative Case Closure
Alleged Hiring Misconduct
CTVHCS, Temple
2005-03345-HL-0960
2005-03445-HI-0007

On September 19, 2005, the Department of Veterans affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) received an allegation referred through the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee from an anonymous source. The OIG Hotline Division referred the allegation to the Dallas Office of Healthcare Inspections in accordance with VA OIG GM Directive 316. We were to determine the merit of the allegation, any corrective actions taken and completion dates of those corrective actions, and provide a report to the Hotline division describing the review process.

Background

(b)(6) The complainant alleged that [redacted] M.D. was improperly selected
(b)(6) as [redacted] Central Texas Veterans Health Care System (CTVHCS) in Temple, TX. Dr. [redacted] does not have Board Certification in Family Practice with Added Qualification [redacted] (b)(6). It is alleged that this certification was required by the vacancy announcement and that the Chief of Staff, [redacted] M.D., ignored this requirement in her selection of Dr. [redacted]

(b)(6) We requested a copy of all job announcements for the position of [redacted] (b)(6)
(b)(6) [redacted] from CTVHCS. Additionally, we requested primary source verification of Dr. [redacted] license and board certification, and date of hire. This information was received September 29, 2005, via FAX from [redacted] (b)(6)
(b)(6) [redacted] Medical Staff Coordinator. Dr. [redacted] was interviewed on [redacted] (b)(6)
(b)(6) Friday, September 30, concerning the hiring process for the [redacted] (b)(6) position. Dr. [redacted] forwarded a memorandum "Selection of [redacted] CTVHCS" (attachment 1) to this office per our request on October 13, to clarify how Dr. [redacted] met the qualifications for that position.

Findings

(b)(6) [redacted] M.D., currently maintains a full-unrestricted license in the state of Florida which has been primary source verified by CTVHCS (expires January 31, 2006).

(b)(6) [redacted] M.D., is currently Board Certified in Family Practice by the American Board of Family Medicine which has been primary source verified by CTVHCS (expires December 31, 2010).

(b)(6) [redacted] M.D., does not have a subspecialty board certification in [redacted] referred to as a certificate of [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

(b)(6) Per our interview with Dr. [redacted] the hiring process began with the vacancy announcements being posted and candidate applications being forwarded to the selection committee. The committee was made up of several physicians within the CTVHCS. Members included, but were not limited to, the Chief of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service and the Deputy Director of Mental Health and Behavioral Medicine Service. [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

(b)(6) [redacted] Additional requirements placed a strong emphasis on leadership, and both Dr. [redacted] and the committee placed an emphasis on these requirements due to the needs of CTVHCS as recently evaluated by external agencies.

The committee reviewed all applicants, considering their qualifications in reference to the vacancy announcement and the needs of the healthcare system. Qualifications included education, training, licensure, and certification, as well as strong communication skills, the ability to interact well with a variety of individuals, and proven accomplishments as a dynamic leader. While some applicants had subspecialty certification [redacted], the committee felt they lacked the necessary leadership skills required to meet the goals of the position. A recommendation to hire Dr. [redacted] was forwarded to the Chief of Staff for concurrence.

(b)(6) Dr. [redacted] explained that Dr. [redacted] is an excellent senior clinician with
(b)(6) over 25 years as a Family Practitioner, all of which include [redacted]
[redacted]. With a career in military medicine (United States Army Medical Corps), a diversified clinical practice [redacted] and strong leadership accomplishments, Dr. [redacted] concurred with the selection board's recommendation to hire Dr. [redacted] as the [redacted] (b)(6)
[redacted] for CTVHS at Temple, TX. Our interview with Dr. [redacted] (b)(6)
(b)(6) [redacted] indicated that Dr. [redacted] continues to meet the expectations of the position. (b)(6)

The vacancy announcement contained the requirement that the applicant: "Must be Board Certified in Internal Medicine or Family Practice [redacted] [redacted] If the announcement had contained the phrase, "[redacted] [redacted], then the requirement for the position would require the applicant to be board certified in this subspecialty. The


¹ In a joint venture, the American Board of Family Medicine and the American Board of Internal Medicine offer a [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted]

(b)(6) announcement requires that the applicant be board certified in Internal Medicine or Family Practice, a condition that Dr. [redacted] met. In addition, the statement required that the applicant meet a standard of having (b)(6)

(b)(6) Conclusions: We did not substantiate the allegation that Dr. [redacted] did not hire Dr. [redacted] in accordance with qualification requirements as stated in Vacancy Announcement T38-2004-09. Dr. [redacted] is Board Certified in Family Practice and may be considered to have (b)(6) although he does not have a certificate of (b)(6). The "Added Qualifications" phrase is a term of art that distinguishes between those practitioners who have subspecialty board certification and those whose clinical experience allows them to meet the lesser "subspecialty" standard. (b)(6)

(b)(6) We discussed this issue with Mr. [redacted] Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Administrative and Human Resources Management Team. (b)(6) [redacted] told us that Dr. [redacted] decision to hire Dr. [redacted] as the (b)(6) [redacted] was appropriate and was not in violation of VHA personnel hiring practices. Based upon our review of the facts, this case is being closed without issuing a formal report. A copy of this summary will be given to the Director, Hotline Division (53E).

Prepared by:


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Assistant Inspector General for
Healthcare Inspections

Karen A. Moore, RN, MSHA, CPHQ

Date: January 27, 2006

Attachments:

1. VA Memorandum dated September 19, 2005
2. CTVHCS FAX from Medical Staff Coordinator dated September 29, 2005
- (b)(6) 3. Current Florida License [redacted] M.D.
- (b)(6) 4. Family Practice Board Certification [redacted] M.D.
5. Job Vacancy Announcements T38-2004-09 as published in USAJOBS for External candidates
6. Job Vacancy Announcements T38-2004-09 as published in USAJOBS for Internal candidates
7. Job Vacancy Announcements T38-2004-09 as Internal Title 38 Vacancy